

656 Pleasant St. ~ P.O. Box 816 ~ Beloit, WI 53511
T 608-362-9099 ~ F 608-362-2330 ~ www.angelmuseum.com



Hello my name is Ruth Carlson and I represent the Beloit Angel Museum, home of the world's largest angel collection and one of Beloit's most popular tourist attractions. Since we opened in 1998, over 190,000 visitors have come to Beloit to see this amazing collection located in an historic building. The museum operates on a very limited yearly budget of less than \$70,000 including salaries so as you can imagine, it is critical to our survival that we do fund-raising during the year to sustain day-to-day operations.

One of our major annual fundraisers, the Angel Museum Sip & Taste, generates approximately \$8000.00 which represents roughly 11% of our annual budget. This event is generously supported by many of our partners in the hospitality industry. In fact, last year we had over 20 different restaurants, caterers and beverage distributors involved in providing food and beverages for the event.

Due to the unique setup required for this event, there were very few venues in our area that can be identified as being suitable for hosting this type of event. Two years ago, a local car dealer offered us the use of his dealership. We accepted because it met our requirements for space and he generously offered the facility at no charge which helped us maximize our profits. Shortly after we were issued the license, we were advised future event locations where "other business is being conducted" would be denied a Class B temporary license by the municipality and future events serving alcohol would need to be held at a licensed location. As you can imagine this has highly impacted our potential income on our fund raisers.

My concerns renting a licensed establishment for future events are as follows:

1. The event is a community/business focused affair which gives the community a unique event to attend at a reasonable price, highlights local business and raises funds for the museum.
2. Renting a licensed establishment large enough to hold our event would be cost prohibitive and limit the profits from the event.
3. Identifying an appropriate venue that would allow competitors to bring in food and beverages also limits the space requirements as well as potential profits for the event. Because so many of our restaurants participate, a neutral venue is important.

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4. A private venue (be it residential, commercial or otherwise) that offers the use of their space for a non-profit fundraising event is not profiting from the sale of beer and wine in a manner that competes with other Class A or Class B license holders. The host facility is simply helping to raise funds for a non-profit organization. Senate Bill 537 would allow us to pursue new options, without costing the state or the tax payers any money.
5. Our ability to raise funds is already hampered by the economic challenges facing Beloit and Rock County. The future of our organization and many others depends on the generosity of our community members and our community partners.

Finally, I would like to mention that the 20 plus private businesses, including restaurants, taverns and caterers that participated in this event did not view a non-profit fundraiser held in a non-traditional location as a form of competition to their establishments. On the contrary, they recognized it as an opportunity to introduce their products and businesses to hundreds of potential customers.

By hosting the Angel Museum Sip & Taste in a location where "other business is conducted", we are not competing with local licensed businesses; we are contributing to their success by providing them with opportunities and a venue to meet potentially new customers which benefits everyone.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony and for your consideration of this important bill.

2009 SENATE BILL 537 HEARING

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 10, 2010

My name is Deb Frederiksen and I am the Executive Director of Visit Beloit. Beloit has seen a resurgence of energy and revitalization throughout the last ten years. The community has seen the quality of life and desirability of the area increase significantly. The increase is seen with visitors, employers and employees and satisfaction from the residents.

Beloit has worked through the years and continues to work on the image of the community that has evolved into an arts and entertainment district. The success of many of these events include the serving of beer and wine. These are social events, appropriate venues in which include restaurants, local businesses and various private venues.

These fundraising events help support the arts. These fundraising events help to support the economic vitality of the community. These fundraising events draw visitors. These fundraising events allow us to market the positive image of the community. These fundraising events make a difference to the success of Beloit.

This increase is for the most part through the hard work of the not for profit organizations including civic, educational, religious and fraternal organizations.

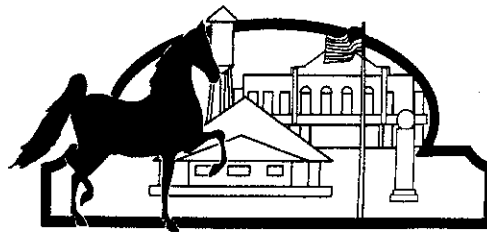
To carry out the mission of these organizations, requires the ability to fundraise.

The economy has given us additional challenges. Budget cuts abound and creativity is needed to make up for funding and grants that we have seen in the past. With these budget cuts, we are having to compete for dollars to fund organizations, to draw visitors, to create the quality of life that will draw employers which will in turn draw more residents which will increase the economic vitality of the community.

According to the Nonprofit Almanac 2008, nonprofits generate 8 percent of the gross domestic product (GDP) in the United States and employ one in every fourteen American workers. Nonprofits mobilize the efforts of an army: 61.2 million adults volunteering 12.9 billion hours each year toward community and public benefit-the equivalent of 7.6 million full-time staff.

Every action has a ripple effect.

To what benefit to add an additional strangle hold on organizations that struggle to exist and serve their missions in this economy?



OREGON AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Promote. Inform. Connect. Advocate

SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 537

March 9, 2010

Wisconsin Non-Profit entities, like our organization, the Oregon Area Chamber of Commerce that wish to serve beer or wine at fundraising or networking events are subject to restrictions and regulations set forth in Section 125 of the Wisconsin State Statutes.

We are a business association of about 200 members with a mission to advance and promote the commercial, industrial, agricultural, educational & civic interests of the Oregon community and surrounding areas in order to enhance the high quality of life. Our four core values include promoting local businesses, providing information to & about members, providing connections with another business, and advocating for the general interests of our membership.

Fifty percent of our gross revenue come from fundraising efforts and the other half from member dues. Our ability to meet or implement fundraising events successfully allow us to continue to do our work in the community in which we serve.

Over ninety percent of our membership compose of small & family-owned business owners. These entrepreneurs serve as the backbone of our local economy. Networking opportunities among these entrepreneurs help pave the way for a robust exchange of information with one another that leads to patronage and increased local sales.

In addition to organizing major fundraisers like a Summer Fest Festival and golf outing, we hold annual awards dinner recognizing outstanding business achievement, "After-5 or Before-5 Business mixers, a Business Exposition, and if it's election year, organize a Candidates' Forum to allow members get the opportunity to meet and ask candidates to help them make informed political decisions. The limit of two wine licenses a year makes it impractical for us to carry out meaningful and engaging events for our members in a community like ours with limited venues, and inhibit options for members willing to host these events.

The Oregon Area Chamber of Commerce support the Exemption to allow nonprofit organizations to obtain a temporary license to serve beer or wine at a fund-raising event on premises where other business is conducted. We also support to increase the number of temporary wine licenses per year to five.

The intent of our member events are based on our four core values: Promote, Inform, Connect & Advocate. These events are not to profit from the sale of alcohol or to compete with other Class A or Class B license holders but to enhance relationships with one another. Or for public events that we initiate, the goal is to raise enough funds to support the continuous existence of a chamber of commerce that benefit the greater good of our town, Oregon and surrounding areas.

(Sgd.) MARECHIEL SANTOS-LANG
Executive Director

(Sgd.) STEVE PEOTTER
President

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Member: Greater Madison Convention & Visitors Bureau • Wisconsin Chamber of Commerce

BELOIT NOON LIONS



We Serve

March 10, 2010

TO: State Senator Judy Robson
State Representative Benedict

RE: 2009 Senate Bill 537

Dear Senator Robson and Representative Benedict:

I am writing in support of Senate Bill 537 which would allow nonprofit organizations to obtain a temporary permit to serve beer and wine at their fundraising functions five (5) times per year for a nominal fee. The functions could be held in any premises for which the nonprofit organization applies for.

The Beloit Noon Lions Club has been in existence for over 87 years and has, during that time, held two annual fundraisers to raise club operating funds and generate membership. These twice annual Steak Fry events were the major fundraisers for club operating funds, since our By-Laws require that monies raised from the public at large can only be used for charitable works, not club operations. The sale of beer, wine and liquor at the Steak Fry is a major component of the monies raised. However, in the last two years this has changed due to enforcement of the law that this Senate Bill 537 is designed to correct. While we are in favor of Senate Bill 537, in our opinion it does not go far enough, in that it limits the alcohol sales to beer and wine and does not include liquor.

Over the 87 year history of our club, we have generated over \$1.5 million dollars to support our charitable ventures such as the Wisconsin Lions Camp for the visually impaired, our eye glass program for the needy, vision screening for children, city park improvements and many more. But, what makes it possible to sustain our Lions Club's administrative costs, are the monies raised from the steak fries we host; and an integral part of that is the money from the sale of beer, wine and liquor.

Finally, the events that nonprofit organizations hold do not compete with local taverns. People that attend nonprofit events that serve beer, wine and liquor attend the events to support the money raising efforts of the nonprofit organization.

Thank you for your consideration on this matter.

Sincerely yours,

James F. Heidt

James F. Heidt, Member
Beloit Noon Lions Club

Our 87th Year of Community Service

Testimony offered in support of amendments to 2009 SENATE BILL 537 relating to the issuance of temporary alcohol beverages licenses to nonprofit organizations authorizing the sale of beer or wine at fund-raising events.

By Ron Nief, Beloit community member, a founding producer of the Beloit International Film Festival, and Director of Public Affairs Emeritus of Beloit College

Building community spirit is a priority in Beloit. Citizens have worked tirelessly to establish Beloit's reputation as an arts and entertainment center, building around the Beloit Janesville Symphony Orchestra, the Beloit International Film Festival, Riverfest, a variety of museums, and events like the Spring Art Walk and the winter Holidazzle. These programs, organizations, and events and the ability to raise the money to support them are all threatened by the restrictions that are contained in existing regulations.

In recent years, an event that has celebrated Beloit internationally is the Beloit International Film Festival, known as BIFF. It draws thousands of people to the community and hundreds of filmmakers from all over the U.S and around the world—this year from six continents. The filmmakers come because of the welcome and intense interest exhibited by Beloit citizens. They come for the recognition given to their films and for the Emerging Film Artist Awards—financial support that they are given to assist them in the completion of their projects. This year, one of those projects, by a Rock County filmmaker, appeared at the prestigious Sundance Film Festival and Beloit, Wisconsin, went along in the credits.

BIFF is created with the support of local citizens, businesses, and organizations that sponsor the various events and put in the effort to create special programs, such as a dozen Cinema à la Carte dinners to raise the funds needed for the awards.

BIFF and Cinema à la Carte are threatened by a law that has placed so many restrictions on our events that fundraising and recognition has been made difficult if not impossible. For the past four years, our major sponsor, a leading member of the community, has celebrated her business involvement in the community by hosting the opening Film Festival Launch Party. This much anticipated event has always taken place at the corporate world headquarters that she and her late husband crafted from the ruins of an earlier industrial era, a symbol of Beloit's vitality and vision. This year, however, because of these restrictions, she was denied that opportunity and we were not able to celebrate this centerpiece of Beloit, or acknowledge our major donor, or show off this proud element of Beloit to our visitors.

The Cinema à la Carte dinners, which raise 7-15 percent of the BIFF budget annually and bring hundreds of individuals together to celebrate Beloit and the art of filmmaking, are threatened. Despite taking place in the homes and businesses of hosts for invited patrons, their continuity and the important resources they provide are challenged, all because we serve wine.



Serving the
Lodging Industry
for Over 100 Years

March 10, 2010

To: Senate Committee on Transportation, Tourism, Forestry, and
Natural Resources
Senator Jim Holperin, Chairman

From: Trisha Pugal, CAE
President, CEO

RE: SB 537 – Expansion of Temporary Class B Alcohol Beverage
Licenses

On behalf of over 900 lodging properties throughout Wisconsin, we would like to express our concerns in opposing certain components of SB 537.

First, the newly added **definition of “nonprofit organization”** allows both 501c3 (educational/charitable) and 501c6 (business associations) to be eligible for the also newly expanded temporary licenses. Our industry relies considerably on revenue from events held by associations in our banquet rooms, and other public spaces, plus we are required to ensure compliance with numerous regulations that protect the safety of the guests. The new definition would expand the service of alcohol beverages by volunteers not trained in such service, and at the same time would reduce revenue to our already struggling industry.

Second, the **expansion of eligible locations** to serve the alcohol beverages to include other business locations would also cost revenue losses to those in our industry that are in the profession of serving food and beverages within the safety requirements of state law.

Your consideration of our concerns is appreciated.

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Testimony offered in support of amendments to 2009 SENATE BILL 537 relating to the issuance of temporary alcohol beverages licenses to nonprofit organizations authorizing the sale of beer or wine at fund-raising events.

By Roddie H Beaudoin, co-founding producer of the Beloit International Film Festival, Executive Director of the Beloit International Film Festival and The Beloit Janesville Symphony Orchestra, and member of the Board of Directors for Beloit Riverfest.

Fundraising is critical to the survival of nonprofit organizations. The Beloit Janesville Symphony Orchestra has been the cornerstone of culture in Rock County for over half a century. But today we find ourselves in peril. Like many arts organizations the fight for the dollars to survive is extreme. Charitable giving is down in our part of the state partially attributed to the closing of the GM plant and the fact that Beloit has the highest unemployment rate in the state. The market and recent years in the red, despite significant budget cuts, have distressed an endowment that was once substantial.

Our board of directors is comprised of retired teachers, young professionals in the early stages of their careers, a printer, landscaper and few people of modest means, but all lions of creative energy and thought who are unified in their dedication to making Beloit, Janesville and the entire Stateline area a better place to live. In our fundraising endeavors we work diligently to offer our patrons unique experiences, our youth and their families educational opportunities; efforts that are worthy of an organization within a community dedicated to keeping the arts alive.

We respectfully ask the Senate to give us the tools that allow us to raise the funds necessary within our community to support our community. Due to recent interpretation of state law pertaining to temporary licenses we find our garden party, with performances by chamber groups from within the symphony are in peril. A glass of wine on a warm summer evening in a garden setting at a private home, meeting with old friends and making new friends in a unique and warm environment are not permitted. Our Octoberfest in the fall is in jeopardy as are other events hosted by businesses that offer us a unique and inviting environment but do not meet the criteria of the present law.

The dollars raised from these events help to keep the Symphony viable within our community. It supports employment of scores of area musicians and staff. These funds help to fuel our annual children's concert, library and grade school outreach programs to name a few. The economic impact of a symphony performance helps to fill area restaurants after performances. Our free ticket programs allow those less fortunate to experience the joys of the masters.

Nationally, Twenty percent of a Symphony Orchestra's budget is funded by ticket sales. Our percentage has been less the past two years. The balance of funding must come from grants, donations and fundraising. This year we cut our budget from approximately \$350,000 to \$285,000. Special event fundraising that is directly impacted by this bill can contribute up to Ten percent of our annual budget.

Those funds are dollars that we need. Yet we also want and need the spirit that these events bring to our citizens and patrons. Individual supporters allowed to showcase their home or businesses in helping to sustain an integral part of our regional culture is important to our Orchestra, city, county and state.

Testimony offered in support of amendments to 2009 SENATE BILL 537 relating to the issuance of temporary alcohol beverages licenses to nonprofit organizations authorizing the sale of beer or wine at fund-raising events.

By Roddie H Beaudoin, co-founding producer of the Beloit International Film Festival, Executive Director of the Beloit International Film Festival and The Beloit Janesville Symphony Orchestra, and member of the Board of Directors for Beloit Riverfest.

On behalf of Beloit Riverfest, a 23 year old community music festival held on the Rock River at Riverside Park in Beloit, we respectfully request that the present amendment include 501c4 non-profit corporations in its definitions of the same.